

REVIEW

Biocultural Expectancy of Breastfeeding Practice: A Qualitative Content Analysis Using Bibliometric Review

Expectativa Biocultural De La Práctica De La Lactancia Materna: Un Análisis De Contenido Cualitativo Mediante Revisión Bibliométrica

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ABSTRACT

This research explores the philosophy of breastfeeding practice as a glory. The research objectives are to discover (explore) the deepest structure of breastfeeding practices, explain (explain) the structures found in the context of general breastfeeding practices, and highlight (expose) the glory of breastfeeding according to a religious view (scriptural view). Research steps: a) find information in the form of central themes found in article(s) contained in Scopus indexed journals; b) data analysis using VOSviewer; c) explain the glory of the practice of breastfeeding. This research found the breastfeeding triad includes: nurturing (biology), self-sacrifice (culture), and moral guidance (expectancy) as the implementation of the glory of breastfeeding practices. The breastfeeding triad is confirmed by findings from religious views (scientific perspective). It is hoped that the results of this research will be a driver for increasing the breastfeeding index, which in turn will support increasing the Human Development Index.

Keywords: Breastfeeding Behavior; Exclusive Breastfeeding; Nurturing; Self-Sacrifice; Moral Guidance.

RESUMEN

Esta investigación explora la filosofía de la práctica de la lactancia materna como una gloria. Objetivos de la investigación: 1) descubrir (explorar) la estructura más profunda de las prácticas de lactancia materna; 2) explicar (explicar) las estructuras encontradas en el contexto de las prácticas generales de lactancia materna; 3) resaltar (exponer) la gloria de la lactancia materna según una visión religiosa (visión escritural). Pasos de la investigación: a) encontrar información en forma de temas centrales encontrados en artículo(s) contenidos en revistas indexadas en Scopus; b) análisis de datos utilizando VOSviewer; c) explicar la gloria de la práctica de la lactancia materna. Esta investigación encontró que la tríada de la lactancia materna incluye: crianza (biología), autosacrificio (cultura) y guía moral (expectativa) como la implementación de la gloria de las prácticas de lactancia materna. La tríada de la lactancia materna está confirmada por hallazgos provenientes de puntos de vista religiosos (perspectiva científica). Se espera que los resultados de esta investigación sean un motor para aumentar el índice de lactancia materna, lo que a su vez apoyará el aumento del Índice de Desarrollo Humano.

Palabras clave: Conducta de Lactancia Materna; Lactancia Materna Exclusiva; Crianza; Autosacrificio; Orientación Moral.

INTRODUCTION

Providing good food intake (ASI) to support a child's growth is one of the obligations of parents because it is a gift given by Allah SWT to a mother.⁽¹⁾ This research focuses on the importance of breastfeeding (*radha'ah*) in the Islamic religious perspective as an obligation that has a broad impact on the welfare of the mother and baby. Islam specifically emphasizes *radha'ah* as a moral and spiritual responsibility for mothers, which is stated in the Qur'an and Hadith. Breastfeeding is considered a form of love and sacrifice, which not only provides physical benefits by providing the best nutrition for the baby, but also creates a strong emotional bond between mother and child. In a social context, *radha'ah* plays a role in building family and community harmony through better emotional and psychological well-being. In addition, modern medical research also shows that breastfeeding contributes to the physical health of mother and baby, strengthens the immune system, and helps optimal child development. Against this background, it is important to explore the philosophical values contained in *radha'ah* and their impact on the holistic well-being of mothers and babies in Muslim societies. In the time of the Prophet, *radha'ah* was only done directly by sucking on a nursing mother's nipple, but nowadays breast milk donation is also often done indirectly, namely taking it from a storage place or in a breast milk bank. The importance of breast milk for babies aged 0-6 months makes breast milk the staple food for babies whose nutritional content cannot be replaced with any other milk.⁽²⁾

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the prevalence of exclusive breastfeeding worldwide will reach 50 % in 2025. Data collected from 2014 to 2020 shows that exclusive breastfeeding in Southeast Asia is 45 %, almost the same as the global prevalence.⁽³⁾ This shows that the success of exclusive breastfeeding is still below 50 % of the population.⁽³⁾ WHO data for 2022 shows that only 42 % of countries have achieved the exclusive breastfeeding target of 75 %, 144 million children under five are estimated to be stunted, 47 million are underweight, and 38,3 million are overweight or obese worldwide⁴. Less than 40 % of children under six months of age receive exclusive breast milk. This occurs 25 % in Central Africa, 32 % in Latin America and the Caribbean, 30 % in East Asia, 47 % in South Asia, and 46 % in developing countries.

The World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF consistently advocate for exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of life, followed by continued breastfeeding with complementary foods until at least two years of age. However, global rates fall considerably short of these recommendations. A 2021 WHO report indicated that only 44 % of infants globally were exclusively breastfed for the first six months, highlighting a significant gap between recommended practices and reality.⁽³⁾ This disparity is further emphasized by the considerable variation between countries, with rates significantly higher in some regions and considerably lower in others. Factors such as socioeconomic status, access to healthcare, cultural norms, and religious beliefs all play a crucial role in shaping these differences. For instance, studies have shown higher breastfeeding rates in countries with strong social support networks and government policies promoting breastfeeding.⁽⁴⁾ Conversely, lower rates are often observed in nations with widespread marketing of infant formula and limited maternity leave policies.⁽⁵⁾ According to the World Health Organization (WHO), in 2021, around 44 % of babies worldwide were exclusively breastfed for the first six months of life. Trends in the global prevalence of exclusive breastfeeding at 0-6 months of age data are shown in figure 1. This figure shows an increase compared to 36 % in 2012. Data from UNICEF shows that in developing countries, around 60 % of babies are breastfed until two years or more. However, in developed countries, this figure tends to be lower, with many mothers stopping breastfeeding before reaching the age of one year. Research shows that breastfeeding can reduce the risk of respiratory infections, diarrhea, and other diseases in babies. Breastfeeding is also associated with a reduced risk of obesity and type 2 diabetes later in life. According to a survey conducted by the World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action (WABA), around 60 % of mothers who do not breastfeed indicate that they experience difficulties in breastfeeding, including lactation problems, lack of social support, and pressure to return to work. In some countries, breastfeeding in public is still considered taboo. A study in the UK found that 30 % of women felt uncomfortable breastfeeding in front of others, which could affect their decision to breastfeed. Some countries have implemented policies to support breastfeeding, such as more extended maternity leave and breastfeeding rooms in the workplace. For example, in Sweden, mothers are given up to 480 days of fully paid maternity leave.⁽¹⁾ However, there is significant variation between countries, with some countries achieving much higher numbers while others are much lower. Socioeconomic factors, culture, and even religious beliefs play a role in these differences.

Figure 1 shows that statistical data has a very important role in increasing the Human Development Index (HDI), one of the indicators in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The health dimension in the HDI is measured by life expectancy at birth. In contrast, the education dimension is measured by the average years of schooling and the expected number of years of education. Meanwhile, the standard of living dimension is assessed based on gross national income per capita. One of the factors that contribute to increasing HDI is the practice of breastfeeding. Regarding baby health, breast milk contains essential nutrients needed for growth and development and can reduce the risk of infections, allergies, and chronic diseases in the future.⁽⁷⁾ Meanwhile, for mothers, breastfeeding can help the post-natal recovery process and reduce the risk of breast and ovarian cancer.⁽⁸⁾ Besides health benefits, breastfeeding also impacts the economic sector because it can

reduce health costs and increase productivity, considering that babies who receive breast milk tend to be healthier and do not require intensive medical care.⁽⁷⁾ Breastfeeding is related to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), namely 17 global goals set by the UN to achieve sustainable development by 2030.

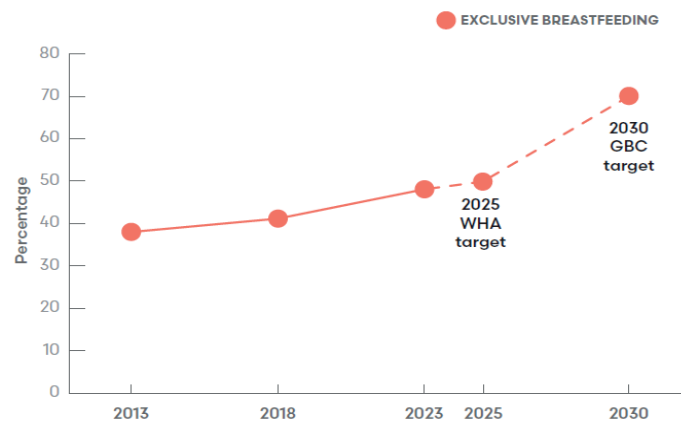


Figure 1. Trends in the global prevalence of exclusive breastfeeding at 0-6 months of age

Source: WHO, 2023 ⁽⁶⁾

Figure 2 shows that the current percentage of breastfeeding toward the breastfeeding target 2030 has not been fully met. Good breastfeeding practices contribute to several SDG goals, including SDG 2 (No Hunger), because they can improve children's nutrition and health, thereby reducing hunger and malnutrition. Apart from that, SDG 3 (Health and Welfare) is also closely related to breastfeeding because increasing the rate of exclusive breastfeeding can reduce infant mortality and increase life expectancy. Good health early in life due to the benefits of breastfeeding can also impact improving children's learning abilities, which ultimately supports the achievement of SDG 4 (Quality Education). In addition, breastfeeding also contributes to SDG 5 (Gender Equality) because supporting breastfeeding mothers can provide them with more significant opportunities to participate in economic and social activities.

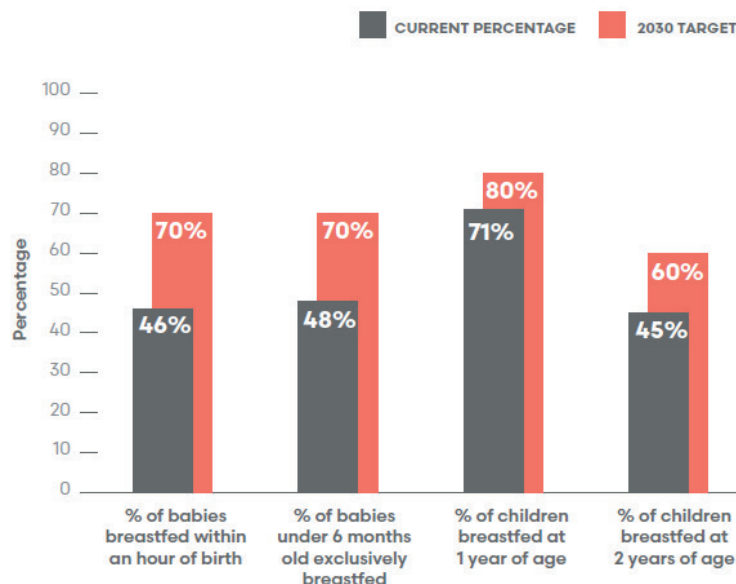


Figure 2. Current rates of breastfeeding against global targets

Source: WHO, 2023 ⁽⁶⁾

Pros and cons of breastfeeding practices occur in all countries. The pros of breastfeeding include significant health benefits for both baby and mother. Breastfeeding provides optimal nutrition for babies because breast milk contains all the nutrients needed for the growth and development of babies, including antibodies that help protect babies from infections.⁽⁷⁾ Breastfeeding can also reduce the risk of chronic diseases later in life, such as obesity and type 2 diabetes.⁽⁹⁾ From the mother's side, breastfeeding can help speed up the postnatal recovery process and reduce the risk of breast and ovarian cancer.⁽⁸⁾ However, there are also cons to

breastfeeding. One of the main challenges is the lack of social support and adequate facilities for breastfeeding mothers, especially in the workplace. Many mothers feel pressured to return to work and do not have access to comfortable breastfeeding spaces.⁽¹⁰⁾ In addition, there is also a social stigma that still exists in some cultures, which considers breastfeeding in public to be inappropriate.⁽¹¹⁾ Some mothers also experience difficulties in breastfeeding due to specific health problems or physical conditions, which can cause stress and feelings of guilt.⁽¹²⁾

Various studies have examined the benefits of breastfeeding from the perspective of physical, psychological, and social health for both mother and baby. Breastfeeding (*radha'ah*) has a broad impact in terms of providing nutrition and shaping physical, mental, and social well-being, which has been recognized in modern medical and sociological studies.⁽¹⁾ **Physical Benefits of Breastfeeding for Mother and Baby:** breastfeeding is the best way to meet the nutritional needs of babies in the first years of life. Research shows that breast milk contains essential bioactive components to support optimal growth and development of babies. **Benefits for Babies:** Breast milk is rich in antibodies, especially immunoglobulin A (IgA), which helps strengthen the baby's immune system, protecting it from diarrhea, pneumonia, and respiratory tract infections. A study shows exclusively breastfed babies suffer less frequently from respiratory and gastrointestinal infections. Breastfeeding is also associated with a reduced risk of obesity and type 2 diabetes, as well as improving babies' cognitive and neurological development. A study from The Lancet noted that breastfed children have higher IQ scores and better academic performance. Other research shows that breastfeeding reduces the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) and allergies in children.⁽²⁾ **Benefits for the Mother:** Breastfeeding helps uterine contractions after delivery, speeds postpartum recovery, and reduces the risk of bleeding. Apart from that, breastfeeding is also associated with a reduced risk of breast and ovarian cancer and osteoporosis in mothers. Breastfeeding also helps mothers lose weight more quickly after giving birth because of the calories burned during breastfeeding.

The aims of the research are to 1) explore what structural biocultural factors facilitate or hinder breastfeeding; 2) explain what topics are seen as good hopes as well as guarantees for the sustainability of breastfeeding practices (motherhood to mothering); 3) Expose how scriptural perspectives support bibliographic data findings.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Breastfeeding is a phenomenon influenced not only by biological factors but also by the cultural context surrounding it. A biocultural perspective recognizes the interaction between biological and cultural factors in understanding breastfeeding practices. According to Pak-Gorstein et al. (2009), breastfeeding practices can be influenced by social norms, cultural values, and public health policies that exist in a community. Although breastfeeding is a natural biological process, methods and attitudes towards breastfeeding vary significantly between different cultures.

In this context, Stuart-Macadam (2017) explains that human biological adaptation to breastfeeding cannot be separated from cultural influences.⁽¹⁴⁾ For example, some cultures may have certain rituals or traditions governing when and how breastfeeding occurs, which can influence the success of breastfeeding itself. In addition, Labbok & Krasovec, (1990) emphasized the importance of social support and a supportive environment for increasing breastfeeding success rates, indicating that cultural factors can play a role in facilitating or hindering breastfeeding practices.⁽¹⁵⁾

Furthermore, O'Sullivan et al. (2015) highlight that in some cultures, breastfeeding is seen as an act of feeding and a form of emotional bonding between mother and child.⁽¹⁶⁾ This shows that existing cultural norms also influence the psychological and emotional aspects of breastfeeding. Thus, a biocultural approach provides a more holistic understanding of breastfeeding practices, considering the interaction between biological and cultural factors.

Breastfeeding practices vary worldwide, influenced by social norms, cultural values, and economic conditions. In many cultures, breastfeeding is integral to child care and bonding between mother and baby. For example, in traditional African societies, breastfeeding is often practiced openly and considered normal.⁽¹⁷⁾

On the other hand, in some Western countries, such as the United States, breastfeeding in public is often a controversial topic. Despite efforts to support breastfeeding, social stigma still exists, and many mothers feel uncomfortable breastfeeding in front of others.⁽¹⁴⁾ This shows how cultural norms can influence a mother's decision to breastfeed.

Cultural beliefs and values also play an important role in breastfeeding practices. In some cultures, there is a belief that breastfeeding can provide strength and better health for babies. For example, in Chinese culture, breast milk is believed to have healing properties and can protect babies from disease.⁽¹⁸⁾

Conversely, in some cultures, there is pressure to give formula milk as a symbol of social status or advancement. In Brazil, for example, despite campaigns to increase breastfeeding rates, many mothers feel pressured to use formula because it is considered more modern.⁽⁷⁾ This shows that breastfeeding practices are influenced not only by health but also by social and economic factors.

Social support from family, friends, and society is also critical to successful breastfeeding. In many cultures,

support from family members, especially grandmothers, can increase breastfeeding success.⁽¹⁹⁾ In addition, government policies that support breastfeeding, such as adequate maternity leave and breastfeeding facilities in the workplace, can also influence mothers' decisions to breastfeed.⁽²⁰⁾

Expectancy Theory, developed by psychologists such as Robert Rosenthal and Lenore Jacobson, focuses on how a person's hopes and expectations can influence behavior and outcomes. In the context of breastfeeding, the mother's expectations regarding the breastfeeding process can affect the success and experience of breastfeeding.

- **Expectations for Baby's Health:** Many mothers believe breast milk is the best source of nutrition for their babies. This hope encourages them to breastfeed to provide the best for their child.
- **Expectations of Emotional Relationships:** Mothers often hope breastfeeding will strengthen their emotional bond with their baby. Research shows that breastfeeding can increase the feeling of closeness and affection between mother and child.⁽²¹⁾
- **Expectations of Social Support:** Mothers who feel supported by their partner, family, and community tend to have more positive expectations of their breastfeeding experience. This support can reduce stress and increase maternal self-confidence.⁽²²⁾

Positive expectations can increase a mother's motivation to breastfeed, while negative expectations can cause stress and anxiety, which in turn can interfere with the breastfeeding process. Research shows that mothers with positive expectations are more likely to be successful in breastfeeding than those with negative expectations.⁽¹⁰⁾ Breastfeeding also has an essential religious dimension in many cultures. In many religious traditions, breastfeeding is considered a sacred and blessed act. In Islam, breastfeeding has a significant place. The Qur'an states that breastfeeding is the child's right and the mother's obligation. In Surah Al-Baqarah (2:233), Allah says, "*The mothers shall give such to their offspring for two whole years if the father desires to complete the term...*".⁽²³⁾ Breastfeeding is considered a form of love and responsibility, and many hadith encourage mothers to breastfeed their children. In this context, breastfeeding is not only seen as a physical act but also as a worship that brings the mother closer to Allah.

In the Christian tradition, breastfeeding is also considered an act of love and sacrifice. Many figures in the Bible show the importance of mothers in giving life and love to their children. For example, Mary, the mother of Jesus, is a prime example of a mother who gives everything for her child.

In Hindu tradition, breastfeeding also has spiritual meaning. Mothers are considered goddesses who provide life and nutrition to their children. Breastfeeding is seen as a sacred ritual where the mother gives a part of herself to her child.

METHOD

This research uses qualitative content analysis by Kuckartz (2019) to examine breastfeeding practices and perspectives based on the results of previous research with bibliometric analysis data.⁽²⁴⁾ This method involves several main steps. First, the research object was determined, and the data was processed and presented using VOSviewer (Bibliometric Study).^(25,26) The data were analyzed using Kuckartz's inductive qualitative structuring content analysis. Data validity strategies include: a) selecting research results according to published themes indexed by Scopus, selecting according to keywords and conformity with the central theme; b) data transparency, the reference sources used are sources that can be accessed and indexed. This valid data is used to explore the structure of research relationships regarding breastfeeding. The structure of the findings was then analyzed qualitatively to obtain an intertextual explanation. The final result of this analysis is converting literal information about breastfeeding related to breastfeeding practice into new knowledge, namely the existence of biocultural expectations regarding breastfeeding. As stated above, this new knowledge is expected to increase HDI significantly.

The general screening processes for selecting relevant literature. In the initial stage, 220 records were found from Scopus after removing works of literature such as gray literature, extended abstracts, presentations, keynotes, book chapters, non-English language papers, and inaccessible publications. The 220 papers were analyzed using VOSviewer to get the crosssectional keyword on those researches.

RESULTS

Breastfeeding, a fundamental aspect of infant nutrition and maternal health, presents a complex interplay of biological, social, cultural, economic, and religious factors. While the health benefits are widely documented, the practice's prevalence and acceptance vary significantly globally, influenced by diverse perspectives and societal norms. This analysis delves into the current state of breastfeeding worldwide, examining its advantages and disadvantages and incorporating findings from relevant research. In this research, we analyze the publication of breastfeeding in Scopus. After we analyzed it, we got the result shown in figure 3.

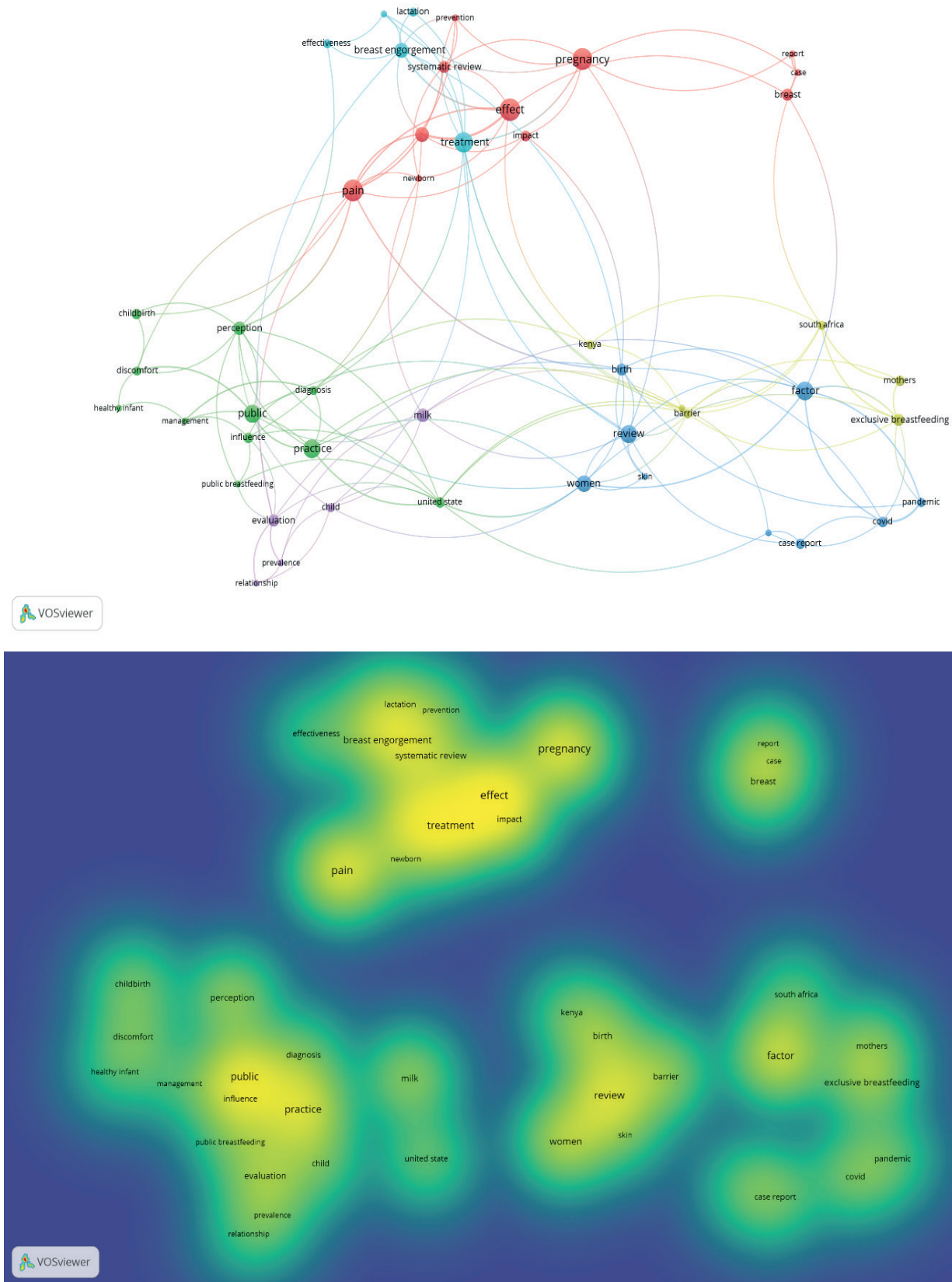


Figure 3. Bibliometric analysis of the collected paper on Scopus

Based on figure 3, we can see that the current research is concerned with exclusive breastfeeding and discomfort. There is no specific research that focuses on the convenience of breastfeeding. This means that breastfeeding has three critical perspectives, called the Breastfeeding Triad. They are nurturing, self sacrifices, and moral guidance see figure 4.

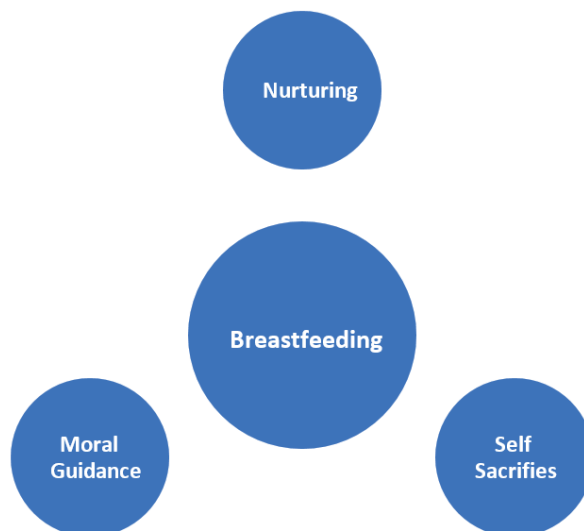


Figure 4. Triad Breastfeeding

DISCUSSION

Breastfeeding is far more than simply providing sustenance; it's a profoundly emotional, moral, and often spiritual process deeply intertwined with the development of the infant and the parent-child bond. This document explores breastfeeding through three key lenses: nurturing, self-sacrifice, and moral guidance, further analyzing its interconnectedness with scriptural and religious perspectives.

Nurturing: The Foundation of Care and Divine Provision

Nurturing encompasses the provision of affection, attention, and support crucial for a child's well-being. In the context of breastfeeding, this extends beyond mere nutrition to encompass the profound emotional interaction between mother and infant. This intimate connection fosters a secure attachment, which is vital for healthy emotional and psychological development.⁽²⁷⁾ Many religious traditions view this nurturing as reflecting divine care and provision.

The physical act of breastfeeding facilitates a powerful emotional bond. The close physical proximity, eye contact, and the release of oxytocin (the "love hormone") in both mother and infant create a sense of security and connection.⁽²⁸⁾ This intimate exchange significantly impacts the infant's emotional regulation and development of trust. The rhythmic sucking and the mother's soothing presence contribute to a sense of calm and contentment in the baby. This experience can be seen as a participation in God's grace, mirroring the unconditional love and care God provides.

From a nurturing perspective, breastfeeding offers significant health advantages. Breast milk provides optimal nutrition tailored to the infant's developmental needs, containing essential nutrients, antibodies, and bioactive components that protect against infections and promote healthy gut development.⁽⁷⁾ The mother actively contributes to the infant's physical health and long-term well-being by providing breast milk. This act of nurturing extends beyond the immediate moment, shaping the child's future health trajectory. Many faiths see this as evidence of a divinely ordained process, a perfect food designed for optimal infant development.

The benefits of breastfeeding are well-established in scientific literature. Numerous studies have demonstrated a strong correlation between breastfeeding and reduced risks of various health issues in infants, including respiratory infections, diarrhea, sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), allergies, obesity, and type 2 diabetes later in life.⁽²⁹⁾ For mothers, breastfeeding is associated with a decreased risk of breast and ovarian cancers, osteoporosis, and postpartum depression.⁽³⁰⁾ These benefits are supported by extensive research, although the precise biological mechanisms underlying these associations continue to be investigated.^(31,32,33,34)

Self-Sacrifice: A Mother's Commitment

In this context, self-sacrifice refers to the mother's prioritization of the infant's needs above her own. This often involves significant personal sacrifices, both physical and emotional, to ensure breastfeeding success. Many religious traditions emphasize self-sacrifice as a virtue, and breastfeeding can be seen as a powerful embodiment of this principle. Putting the child's needs before one's mirrors the selfless love often attributed to divine figures.

Breastfeeding is not without its challenges. Mothers may experience physical discomfort such as sore nipples, mastitis, or latch difficulties.^(35,36,37,38) Furthermore, societal pressures, lack of support, and workplace

constraints can add significant stress.⁽²²⁾ Despite these obstacles, many mothers persevere, demonstrating a remarkable commitment to their child's well-being. Overcoming these challenges can be a source of spiritual growth, fostering resilience and faith.

The sacrifices made by breastfeeding mothers reflect a profound love and commitment. It's a multifaceted sacrifice encompassing physical demands (sleep deprivation, altered body image), emotional investment (constant attention, emotional availability), and often, a restructuring of personal priorities. This dedication underscores the powerful bond between mother and child and highlights the immense value placed on the infant's health and development. This resonates with numerous scriptural accounts of selfless love and sacrifice, such as the Good Samaritan parable or Abraham's sacrifice.

Moral Guidance Through Breastfeeding

Moral guidance refers to transmitting values and principles from parent to child. Breastfeeding, as an act of nurturing and self-sacrifice, implicitly conveys crucial moral lessons. Many religious texts emphasize the importance of nurturing and caring for children and breastfeeding directly reflects these values.

The act of breastfeeding embodies care, compassion, and empathy. The infant experiences unconditional love and support, learning about the importance of nurturing relationships. This early experience lays the foundation for developing empathy and compassion towards others.⁽⁸⁾ This mirrors the divine compassion and empathy emphasized in many religious traditions.

The commitment required for successful breastfeeding instills a sense of responsibility and dedication. Mothers learn to prioritize their children's needs, demonstrating the importance of commitment and perseverance. This experience can shape the child's understanding of responsibility and their capacity for long-term commitment in their own lives. This aligns with religious teachings emphasizing responsibility, commitment, and perseverance in spiritual life. For example, the concept of covenant in Judaism and Christianity reflects a similar commitment.

Challenges and Barriers to Breastfeeding

Despite the well-documented benefits, significant barriers hinder the widespread adoption of breastfeeding globally. These challenges include:

- **Lactational Difficulties:** Many mothers experience difficulties with milk production, latching, or other breastfeeding-related issues.^(39,40,41)
- **Lack of Social Support:** Insufficient support from partners, family members, healthcare providers, and workplaces can significantly impact a mother's ability to breastfeed successfully.^(42,43,44) Some countries support breastfeeding (see Figure 5). Based on Figure 5, almost all aspects were under 50 %. It means the target for 2030 is too far away to be reached.
- **Workplace Constraints:** The lack of adequate maternity leave, breastfeeding facilities in the workplace, and flexible work arrangements often forces mothers to discontinue breastfeeding prematurely.^(45,46,47,48,49,50)
- **Marketing of Infant Formula:** Aggressive marketing of infant formula, often misleadingly portraying it as a superior alternative to breast milk, undermines breastfeeding efforts.^(51,52,53)
- **Cultural and Religious Beliefs:** Cultural norms and religious beliefs can either support or hinder breastfeeding practices. In some cultures, breastfeeding in public is considered taboo; in others, it is a widely accepted and celebrated practice.^(54,55,56,57)

Socioeconomic disparities significantly influence breastfeeding rates. Mothers from lower socioeconomic backgrounds often face more significant challenges in accessing adequate healthcare, nutrition, and support, leading to lower breastfeeding rates.⁽⁵⁸⁾ These disparities highlight the need for targeted interventions to address the unique needs of vulnerable populations.

Scriptural Perspectives on Breastfeeding

While specific mentions of breastfeeding are not always explicit or extensive in all religious texts, the underlying principles of nurturing, self-sacrifice, and moral guidance are consistently emphasized. For example:

- **Islam:** The Quran emphasizes the importance of motherhood and the nurturing of children. Breastfeeding is highly encouraged and considered a sacred act.
- **Christianity:** While not explicitly detailed, the emphasis on love, compassion, and self-sacrifice in the teachings of Jesus aligns strongly with the values inherent in breastfeeding.
- **Judaism:** Jewish law and tradition emphasize the importance of caring for children and the mother's role in their upbringing. Breastfeeding is seen as a natural and essential part of this process.

In the Scriptural Perspective, religious and spiritual beliefs significantly shape attitudes and practices surrounding breastfeeding. Scriptural perspective is part of moral guidance aspect of breastfeeding practice.

Many religions view breastfeeding as a sacred act, emphasizing its importance for the well-being of both mother and child. However, interpretations and practices vary across different faiths. Some religious texts and traditions explicitly encourage breastfeeding, while others may offer less direct guidance or present conflicting perspectives.⁽⁵⁹⁾ Understanding these diverse perspectives is crucial for developing culturally sensitive interventions that support breastfeeding mothers while respecting their religious beliefs.

Breastfeeding remains a critical public health issue, requiring a multi-pronged approach to address the complex interplay of factors influencing its practice. While the health benefits are undeniable, significant barriers persist, necessitating comprehensive strategies that address individual, societal, and systemic challenges. These strategies should include:

- Improved access to quality healthcare and education: Providing mothers with accurate information and support is crucial.
- Supportive workplace policies: Implementing policies that facilitate breastfeeding in the workplace is essential.
- Addressing the marketing of infant formula: Regulations and public awareness campaigns are needed to counter misleading marketing practices.
- Promoting culturally sensitive interventions: Respecting diverse cultural and religious beliefs is crucial for effective interventions.

Further research is needed to understand the complex interplay of factors influencing breastfeeding practices fully and to develop effective strategies to improve rates globally while respecting cultural and religious diversity. This requires a collaborative effort involving healthcare professionals, policymakers, community leaders, and families.

Breastfeeding is called *Radha'ah* in Moslem views. Linguistically, *Radha* is the masher form (verb without tense) of the word *Radha*. It is said that *radha'atshadya* means he sucks his mother's milk. Meanwhile, in terms of the term *radha'ah*, it means suckling a child who is less than two years old; he is suckling the milk of a woman whose milk is overflowing, either because she is pregnant or something else.⁽⁶⁰⁾ *Radha'ah* (breastfeeding) in Islam is an essential obligation for mothers, which is reflected in various teachings of the Koran and Hadith. The requirements for al-Rada'ah have 5 points, namely: the milk given to a breastfed child must be produced from a legitimate relationship, the milk enters the child's throat, the milk can enter through the mouth or nose, and the breast-feeding is still a baby.⁽⁶¹⁾

This concept is related to meeting the baby's physical needs and carries deep moral and spiritual values. *Radha'ah* (breastfeeding) in Islamic teachings is not only understood as a biological act to meet the nutritional needs of babies but also contains essential moral, spiritual, and social values. The philosophy and ethics underlying *radha'ah* reflect the principles of humanity, compassion, and responsibility in Islamic teachings, which aim to create individual and societal prosperity.

(1) Al-Qur'an Regarding *Radha'ah*, the Al-Qur'an explicitly mentions the critical role of mothers in providing breast milk (breast milk) to their babies. One verse that is often used as a basis is Surah Al-Baqarah (2:233), which states: "*The mothers shall give such to their offspring for two whole years if the father desires to complete the term...*".⁽²³⁾ This verse shows the importance of *radha'ah* for two years, providing the basis for the mother's obligation to breastfeed as a form of love and attention to the baby's nutritional needs. Apart from that, this verse also emphasizes the responsibility of both parents in supporting the breastfeeding process, which shows the importance of collaboration within the family. In his commentary, Al-Qurthubi & Al-Anshari (1964:160) explains that verse 233 of Surah Al-Baqarah talks about women who have been divorced and have children from their husbands.

(2) Hadith About *Radha'ah*: In addition to the Qur'an, many Hadiths also describe the importance of breastfeeding. One of the Hadiths that is often referred to is the one narrated by Abu Hurairah, where the Prophet SAW said: "*A woman who breastfeeds her child will be rewarded like a person who fasts during the day and prays at night for 70 years.*" (HR. Ibn Majah). This hadith emphasizes the magnitude of the rewards for mothers who breastfeed, highlighting the importance of breastfeeding not only as a physical act but also as an act of worship with spiritual value.

(3) The role of the mother in *Radha'ah*, Islam views the mother as the main figure in breastfeeding, with the responsibility to provide breast milk as a form of fulfilling the child's rights. This responsibility is seen not only as a physical obligation, but also a moral and spiritual responsibility. In Islam, breastfeeding is seen as a way to instill affection, form an emotional bond between mother and child, and strengthen family ties.

Radha'ah is also seen as a form of mother's sacrifice and commitment to the child's welfare. Therefore, breastfeeding is considered a symbol of deep love and the mother's responsibility in ensuring optimal growth and development of the child.

(4) Benefits of *Radha'ah* In Islam, in the Islamic context, the benefits of *radha'ah* are not only limited to the baby's physical needs such as nutrition, but also include spiritual and emotional aspects. Breastfeeding is

seen as a way to create a strong relationship between mother and child, which plays a role in shaping children's character and educating them in Islamic values from an early age.

Islamic values in radha'ah

1. Moral Values in *Radha'ah*, in Islam

Radha'ah is seen as the mother's moral responsibility towards her child. The Qur'an and Hadith emphasize the importance of the mother's role in fulfilling children's rights, including the right to be breastfed for two years, as stated in Surah Al-Baqarah (2:233).⁽²³⁾ Breastfeeding is considered a mother's moral obligation to provide the best for her child. *Radha'ah* also reflects the attitude of sacrifice and commitment of a mother in caring for and looking after her child. This sacrifice is not only seen from the physical aspect, such as providing breast milk, but also from the emotional aspect and the time spent to form a strong bond between mother and child. A mother's commitment to breastfeeding her child with love and attention is a moral example for the family and society.

2. Spiritual Values in *Radha'ah*

Radha'ah has deep spiritual value in Islam. Breastfeeding is considered an act of worship that is worth a great reward from Allah. Mothers who breastfeed, as mentioned in the Hadith, receive a reward equivalent to someone who fasts and prays at night for many years. This shows that *radha'ah* is not only a physical action, but also a form of obedience and devotion to Allah SWT. In addition, the affection shown by the mother during breastfeeding is considered a manifestation of God's grace. The emotional bond that forms between mother and child during the breastfeeding process is a reflection of the divine love that flows in the parent-child relationship. Therefore, breastfeeding is not only a biological obligation, but also a means of instilling religious values in children from an early age, such as gratitude, love and obedience to Allah.

3. Social Values in *Radha'ah*

Social perspective, *radha'ah* plays an important role in building the welfare of the family and society. Breastfeeding creates a strong bond between mother and child, which is the basis for building harmonious relationships within the family. In Islamic society, the family is the smallest unit that plays an important role in creating a healthy and empowered society. By breastfeeding, the mother not only meets the child's physical needs, but also contributes to his psychological and emotional development. Children who are breastfed tend to have a better sense of security, self-confidence and emotional closeness with their mothers. This contributes to the child's future psychological well-being, which in turn helps create socially and emotionally healthy individuals in society.

4. *Radha'ah* Ethics in Islam

Breastfeeding ethics in Islam involve several basic principles, including: Mother's Obligation to Breastfeed: Mothers are expected to fulfill their moral and religious obligations to breastfeed their children if they are physically and emotionally able. This obligation reflects the importance of the mother in maintaining the well-being of the baby., Father's Involvement: Although breastfeeding is the mother's role, fathers also have a responsibility to support this process, both emotionally and financially. Fathers play a role in creating an environment that supports mothers to breastfeed. Breastfeeding for Two Years: Islam recommends that babies be breastfed for two full years, in accordance with the guidance of the Koran. This shows the importance of breastfeeding duration for optimal child development. Joint Decisions in Weaning: The process of weaning a baby, namely stopping breastfeeding, must be carried out with an agreement between husband and wife, indicating that *radha'ah* also reflects the principle of deliberation within the family.

CONCLUSION

Breastfeeding practices have the potential to drive improvements in the Human Development Index. It contains glory. Based on the literature search that forms the basis of this research, it was found that the deepest structure of breastfeeding contains unique characteristics. By considering the pros and cons of breastfeeding practices, this research found that the deepest structure of breastfeeding practices is breastfeeding discomfort which is inversely proportional to exclusive breastfeeding, and not breastfeeding comfort or convenience. This means that in human culture, the practice of breastfeeding does not consider comfort but glory. The glory of breastfeeding practice can be seen from 3 aspects (breastfeeding triad), namely nurturing, self-sacrifice, and moral guidance. These three aspects are confirmed by religious views so that they become a new driving force for improving motivation for mothers to be more conscientious and enthusiastic in the practice of breastfeeding.

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